

Witchcraft

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## TRIAL OF WITCHES,

AT THE BURY ASSIZES, MARCH 10, 1663.

[1664]

Before Sir Matthew Hale, knight, Lord Chief Baron of his Majesty's Exchequer, Rose Cullender and Amy Duny, widows, both of Leytstoff, in the county of Suffolk, were severally indicted for Bewitching Elizabeth and Anne Durent, Jane Bocking, Susan Chandler, William Durent, Elizabeth and Deborah Pacey: and the said Cullender and Duny, being arraigned upon the said indictments, pleaded Not Guilty.

THREE of the parties abovenamed, viz. Anne Durent, Susan Chandler, and Elizabeth Pacy, were brought to Bury to the assizes, and were in a reasonable good condition; but that morning they came into the hall to give instructions for the drawing of their bills of indictments, the three persons, children, fell into strange and violent fits, shrieking out in a most sad manner, so that they could not in any wise give any instructions in the court who were the cause of their distemper. And although they did, after some certain space, recover out of their fits, yet they were every one of them struck dumb, so that none of them could speak, neither at that time, nor during the assizes until the conviction of the witches.

As concerning William Durent, being an infant, his mother Dorothy Durent sworn and examined, deposed in open court, That about the tenth of March, 1663, she having a special occasion to go from home, and having none in her house to take care of her said child, it then sucking, desired Amy Duny her neighbour, to look to her child during her absence, for which she promised to give her a penny; but the said Dorothy Durent desired the said Amy not to suckle her child, and laid a great charge upon her not to do it. Upon

which it was asked by the court, why she did give that direction, she being an old woman, and not capable of giving suck? It was answered by the said Dorothy Durent, that she very well knew that she did not give suck, but that for some years before she had gone under the reputation of a witch, which was one cause made her give her the caution. Nevertheless, after the departure of this deponent, the said Amy did suckle the child; and after the return of the said Dorothy, the said Amy did acquaint her, that she had given suck to the child contrary to her command. Whereupon the deponent was very angry with the said Amy for the same, at which the said Amy was much discontented, and used many high expressions, and threatening speeches towards her, telling her that she had as good to have done otherwise than to have found fault with her, and so departed out of her house: and that very night her son fell into strange fits of swooning, and was held in such terrible manner, that she was much affrighted therewith, and so continued for divers weeks. And the said examinant farther said, that she being exceedingly troubled at her child's distemper, did go to a certain person named Dr. Jacob, who lived at Yarmouth, who had the reputation in the country to help children that were bewitched, who advised her to hang up the child's blanket in the chimney corner all day, and at night when she put the child to bed, to put it into the said blanket, and if she found any thing in it, she should not be afraid, but to throw it into the fire. And this deponent did according to his directions, and at night when she took down the blanket with an intent to put her child therein, there

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(Reprinted from the Sir Matthew Hale reports.)

G. F. B.

fell out of the same a great toad, which ran up and down the hearth, and she having a young man only with her in the house, desired him to catch the toad, and throw it into the fire, which the youth did accordingly, and held it there with the tongs; and as soon as it was in the fire it made a great and horrible noise, and after a space there was a flashing in the fire like gunpowder, making a noise like the discharge of a pistol, and thereupon the toad was no more seen nor heard. It was asked by the court, if that after the noise and flashing, there was not the substance of the toad to be seen to consume in the fire? and it was answered by the said Dorothy Durent, that after the flashing and noise, there was no more seen than if there had been none there. The next day there came a young woman, a kinswoman of the said Amy, and a neighbour of this deponent, and told this deponent, that her aunt (meaning the said Amy) was in a most lamentable condition, having her face all scorched with fire, and that she was sitting alone in her house, in her smock, without any fire. And thereupon this deponent went into the house of the said Amy Duny to see her, and found her in the same condition as was related to her; for her face, her legs, and thighs, which this deponent saw, seemed very much scorched and burnt with fire, at which this deponent seemed much to wonder. And asked the said Amy how she came into that sad condition? and the said Amy replied, she might thank her for it, for that she, this deponent, was the cause thereof, but that she should live to see some of her children dead, and she upon crutches. And this deponent farther saith, that after the burning of the said toad, her child recovered, and was well again, and was living at the time of the assizes. And this deponent farther saith, that about the 6th of March, 11 Car. 2. her daughter, Elizabeth Durent, being about the age of ten years, was taken in

like manner as her first child was, and in her fits complained much of Amy Duny, and said, that she did appear to her, and afflict her in such manner as the former. And she, this deponent, going to the apothecary's for something for her said child, when she did return to her own house, she found the said Amy Duny there, and asked her, what she did do there? and her answer was, That she came to see her child, and to give it some water. But she, this deponent, was very angry with her, and thrust her forth of her doors, and when she was out of doors, she said, 'You need not be so angry, for your child will not live long: and this was on a Saturday, and the child died on the Monday following. The cause of whose death this deponent verily believeth was occasioned by the witchcraft of the said Amy Duny: for that the said Amy hath been long reputed to be a witch, and a person of very evil behaviour, whose kindred and relations have been many of them accused of witchcraft, and some of them have been condemned.

The said deponent farther saith, that not long after the death of her daughter Elizabeth Durent, she, this deponent, was taken with a lameness in both her legs, from the knees downward, and that she had no other use of them but only to bear a little upon them till she did remove her crutches, and so continued till the time of the assizes that the witch came to be tried, and was there upon her crutches.

There was one thing very remarkable, that after she had gone upon crutches for upwards of three years, and went upon them at the time of the assizes, in the court when she gave her evidence, and upon the jury's bringing in their verdict, by which the said Amy Duny was found guilty, to the great admiration of all persons, the said Dorothy Durent was restored to the use of her limbs, and went home without making use of her crutches.

II. As concerning Elizabeth and Debo-



Deborah Pacey, the first of the age of eleven years, the other of the age of nine years, or thereabouts: as to the elder, she was brought into the court at the time of the instructions given to draw up the indictments, and afterwards at the time of trial of the said prisoners, but could not speak one word all the time, and for the most part she remained as one wholly senseless, as one in a deep sleep, and could move no part of her body, and all the motion of life that appeared in her was, that as she lay upon cushions in the court upon her back, her stomach and belly by the drawing of her breath, would rise to a great height: and after the said Elizabeth had lain a long time on the table in the court, she came a little to herself, and sat up, but could neither see nor speak, but was sensible of what was said to her, and after a while she laid her head on the bar of the court with a cushion under it, and her hand and her apron upon that, and there she lay a good space of time, and by the direction of the judge, Amy Duny was privately brought to Elizabeth Pacey, and she touched her hand, whereupon the child, without so much as seeing her, for her eyes were closed all the while, suddenly leaped up, and caught Amy Duny by the hand, and afterwards by the face; and with her nails scratched her till blood came, and would by no means leave her till she was taken from her, and afterwards the child would still be pressing towards her, and making signs of anger conceived against her.

Deborah, the younger daughter, was held in such extreme manner, that her parents wholly despaired of her life, and therefore could not bring her to the assizes.

Samuel Pacey, a merchant of Leystoff, aforesaid, (a man who carried himself with much soberness during the trial, from whom proceeded no words, either of passion or malice, though his children were so greatly afflicted) sworn and ex-

amined, deposes, that his younger daughter Deborah, upon Thursday, the tenth of October last, was suddenly taken with a lameness in her legs, so that she could not stand, neither had she any strength in her limbs to support her, and so she continued until the 17th day of the same month, which day being fair and sun-shiny, the child desired to be carried on the east part of the house, to be set upon the bank which looketh upon the sea; and whilst she was sitting there, Amy Duny came to this deponent's house to buy some herrings, but being denied, she went away discontented, and presently returned again, and was denied, and likewise the third time, and was denied as at first, and at her last going away, she went away grumbling, but what she said was not perfectly understood. But at the very same instant of time, the said child was taken with most violent fits, feeling most extreme pain in her stomach, like the pricking of pins, and shrieking out in a most dreadful manner, like unto a whelp, and not like unto a sensible creature. And in this extremity the child continued, to the great grief of her parents, until the thirtieth of the same month. During this time, this deponent sent for one Dr. Feavor, a doctor of physic, to take his advice concerning his child's distemper; the Dr. being come, he saw the child in those fits, but could not conjecture (as he then told this deponent, and afterwards affirmed in open court, at this trial) what might be the cause of the child's affliction. And this deponent farther saith, that by reason of the circumstances aforesaid, and in regard Amy Duny is a woman of an ill fame, and commonly reported to be a witch and sorceress, and for that the said child in her fits would cry out of Amy Duny as the cause of her malady, and that she did affright her with apparitions of her person (as the child in the intervals of her fits related) he, this deponent, did suspect the said Amy Du-

ny for a witch, and caused her to be set in the stocks on the 28th of the same October.

And the said deponent farther deposeth, the said children afflicted would severally complain in their intervals, saying, 'There stands Amy Duny, and there Rose Cullender.'

At other times they would fall into swooning, and upon the recovery to their speech they would cough extremely, and bring up much phlegm, and with the same crooked pins, and one time a two-penny nail with a very broad head; which pins, (amounting to forty or more) together with the two-penny nail, were produced in court, with the affirmation of the said deponent, that he was present when the said nail was vomitted up, and also most of the pins. Commonly at the end of every fit they would cast up a pin, and sometimes they would have four or five fits in one day.

In this manner the said children continued with this deponent for the space of two months, during which time in their intervals this deponent would cause them to read some chapters in the New Testament. Whereupon this deponent several times observed that they would read till they came to the name of Lord, or Jesus, or Christ, and then before they could pronounce either of the said words, they would suddenly fall into their fits. But when they came to the name of Satan, or Devil, they would clap their fingers upon the book, crying out "This bites, but makes me speak right well."

At such time as they recovered out of their fits (occasioned, as this deponent conceives, upon their naming of Lord, or Jesus, or Christ) this deponent hath demanded of them, what is the cause they cannot pronounce those words? they reply, and say, that "Amy Duny saith, I must not use that name."

And farther, the said children, after their fits were past, would tell, how that Amy Duny and Rose Cullender

would appear before them, holding their fits at them, threatening, That if they related either what they saw or heard, that they would torment them ten times more than ever they did before.

And this deponent farther saith, That his children being thus tormented by all the space aforesaid, and finding no hopes of amendment, he sent them to his sister's house, one Margaret Arnold, who lived at Yarmouth, to make trial whether the change of the air might do them any good.

Then Margaret Arnold, being sworn and examined, saith, that the said Elizabeth and Deborah Pacey came to her house about the 30th of November last. Her brother acquainted her that he thought they were bewitched, for that they vomitted pins; and farther informed her of the several passages which occurred at his own house. This deponent said, that she gave no credit to that which was related to her, conceiving possibly the children might use some deceit in putting pins in their mouths themselves: Wherefore this deponent unpinned all their cloaths, and left not so much as one pin upon them, but sewed all the cloaths they wore, instead of pinning them. But this deponent saith, that notwithstanding all this care and circumspection of hers, the children afterwards raised at several times, at least thirty pins in her presence, and had most fierce and violent fits upon them.

The children would in their fits cry out against Rose Cullender and Amy Duny, affirming that they saw them; and they threatened to torment them ten times more if they complained of them. At some times the children (only) would see things run up and down the house in the appearance of mice; and one of them suddenly snapt one with the tongs, and threw it into the fire, and it shrieked out like a rat.

At another time the younger child being out of her fits, went out of doors to take a little fresh air, and presently



a little thing like a bee flew upon her face, and would have gone into her mouth, whereupon the child ran in all haste to the door to get into the house again, shrieking out in a most terrible manner; whereupon this deponent made haste to come to her, but before she could get to her the child fell into her swooning fit, and at last with much pain straining herself, she vomited up a two-penny nail with a broad head; and after that the child had raised up the nail, she came to her understanding; and being demanded by this deponent, how she came by this nail? she answered, That the bee brought this nail, and forced it into her mouth.

And at other times the elder child declared unto this deponent that during the time of her fits, she saw flies come unto her, and bring with them in their mouths crooked pins; and after the child had thus declared the same, she fell again into violent fits, and afterwards raised several pins.

At another time, the said elder child declared unto this deponent, and sitting by the fire, suddenly started up, and said she saw a mouse, and she crept under the table looking after it, and at length she put something in her apron, saying she had caught it, and immediately she ran to the fire and threw it in, and there did appear upon it to this deponent like the flashing of gunpowder, though she confessed she saw nothing in the child's hand.

As concerning Anne Durent, Edmund Durent her father, sworn and examined, said, that he lived in the town of Leystoft, and that the said Rose Cullender, about the latter end of November last, came into this deponent's house to buy some herrings of his wife, but being denied by her, the said Rose returned in a discontented manner; and upon the first of December after, his daughter Anne Durent, was very sorely afflicted in her stomach, and felt great pain, like the pricking of pins, and then fell into swooning fits, and after the recovery from her fits, she declared that she had seen the apparition of the said Rose, who

threatened to torment her. In this manner she continued from the first of December, until this present time of trial; having likewise vomitted up divers pins (produced here in court). This maid was present in court, but could not speak to declare her knowledge, but fell into most violent fits when she was brought before Rose Cullender.

As concerning Jane Bocking, who was so weak she could not be brought to the assizes—

Diana Bocking, sworn and examined, deposed, that she lived in the same town of Leystoft, and that her said daughter having been formerly afflicted with swooning fits, recovered well of them, and so continued for a certain time; and upon the first of February last, she was taken also with great pain in her stomach, like pricking with pins; and afterwards fell into swooning fits, and so continued till the deponent's coming to the assizes, having during the same time taken little or no food, but daily vomitting crooked pins; and upon Sunday last raised seven pins. And whilst her fits were upon her, she would spread forth her arms with her hands open, and use postures as if she caught at something, and would instantly close her hands again; which being immediately forced open, they found several pins diversely crooked, but could neither see, nor perceive how, or in what manner they were conveyed thither. At another time, the same Jane being in another of her fits, talked as if she were discoursing with some persons in the room, (though she would give no answer, nor seem to take notice of any person then present) and would in like manner cast abroad her arms, saying, 'I will not have it, I will not have it;' and at last she said, 'Then I will have it,' and so waving her arm with her hand open, she would presently close the same, which being instantly forced open, they found in it a lath-nail.

In her fits she would frequently complain of Rose Cullender and Amy Dunny, saying, that now she saw Rose Cullender standing at the bed's feet, and another

another time at the bed's head, and so in other places. At last she was stricken dumb, and could not speak one word, though her fits were not upon her, and so she continued for some days; and at last her speech came to her again, and she desired her mother to get her some meat; and being demanded the reason why she could not speak in so long time? she answered, that Amy Dury would not suffer her to speak. This lath nail, and divers of the pins, were produced in court.

As concerning Susan Chandler, one other of the parties supposed to be bewitched, and present in court—

Mary Chandler, mother of the said Susan, sworn and examined, deposed and said, That her said daughter (being of the age of eighteen years, was then in service in the said town of Ley-stoff, and rising up early the next morning to wash, this Rose Cullender appeared to her, and took her by the hand, whereat she was much affrighted, and went forthwith to her mother, (being in the same town) and acquainted her with what she had seen; but being extremely terrified, she fell extreme sick, much grieved at her stomach; and that night after being in bed with another young woman, she suddenly shrieked out, and fell into such extreme fits, as if she were distracted, crying against Rose Cullender; saying she would come to bed to her. She continued in this manner, beating and wearing herself, insomuch that this deponent was glad to get help to attend her. In her intervals she would declare, that some time she saw Rose Cullender, at another time with a great dog with her. She also vomitted up divers crooked pins; and sometimes she was stricken with blindness, and at another time she was dumb, and so she appeared to be in court when the trial of the prisoners was; for she was not able to speak her knowledge; but being brought into the court at the trial, she suddenly fell into her fits, and being carried out of the

court again, within the space of half an hour she came to herself and recovered her speech, and thereupon was immediately brought into the court, and asked by the court, whether she was in condition to take an oath, and to give evidence, she said she could: but when she was sworn, and asked what she could say against either of the prisoners? before she could make any answer she fell into her fits, shrieking out in a miserable manner, crying, 'Burn her! burn her!' which were all the words she could speak.

This was the substance of the evidence given against the prisoners concerning the bewitching of the children before mentioned. At the hearing this evidence, there were divers known persons, as Mr. Serjeant Keeling, Mr. Serjeant Earl, and Mr. Sergeant Barnard present. Mr. Serjeant Keeling seemed much unsatisfied with it, and thought it not sufficient to convict the prisoners.

Dr. Brown of Norwich, a person of great knowledge, after this evidence given, and upon view of the three persons in court, was desired to give his opinion, what he conceived of them; and he was clearly of opinion, that the persons were bewitched; and said—'That in Denmark there had been lately a great discovery of witches, who used the very same way of afflicting persons, by conveying pins into them, and crooked as these pins were, with needles and nails. And his opinion was, that the devil in such cases did work upon the bodies of men and women, upon a natural foundation, that is, to stir up and excite such humours super-abounding in their bodies to a great excess, whereby he did in an extraordinary manner afflict them with such distempers as their bodies were most subject to, as particularly appeared in these children; for he conceived that these swooning fits were natural, and nothing else but what they call the mother, but only heightened to a great excess by the subtilty of the devil,



vil, co-operating with the malice of these which we term witches, at whose instance he doth these villainies.'

During the time of the trial, there were some experiments made with the persons afflicted, by bringing the persons to touch them; and it was observed that when they were in the midst of their fits, to all men's apprehension wholly deprived of all sense and understanding, closing their fists in such manner, as that the strongest man in the court could not force them open; yet by the least touch of one of these supposed witches, they would suddenly shriek out, opening their hands.

And lest they might privately see when they were touched, they were blinded with their own aprons, and the touching took the same effect as before.

There was an ingenious person that objected, there might be a great fallacy in this experiment. Wherefore it was privately desired by the judge, that the Lord Cornwallis, Sir Edmund Bacon, and Mr. Serjeant Keeling, and some other gentlemen there in court, would attend one of the distempered persons in the farther part of the hall, whilst she was in her fits, and then to send for one of the witches, to try what would then happen, which they did accordingly, and Amy Duny was conveyed from the bar, and brought to the maid: they put an apron before her eyes, and then one other person touched her hand, which produced the same effect as the touch of the witch did in the court. Whereupon the gentlemen returned, openly protesting that they did believe the whole transaction of this business was a mere imposture.

This put the court, and all persons into a stand. But at length Mr. Pacy did declare, that possibly the maid might be deceived by a suspicion that the witch touched her when she did not.

This saying of Mr. Pacy was thought to be true; for when his daughter was

fully recovered, she was asked, whether she did hear and understand any thing that was done and acted in the court during the time that she lay as one deprived of her understanding? and she said she did: and by the opinions of some, this experiment (which others would have a fallacy) was rather a confirmation that the parties were really bewitched.

John Soam, of Leystoft afore said, yeoman, deposed, that not long since, in harvest time, he had threecarts, which brought home his harvest, and as they were going into the field to load, one of the carts wrenched the window of Rose Cullender's house, whereupon she came out in a great rage, and threatened this deponent for doing that wrong, and so they passed along into the fields, and loaded all the three carts, the other two carts returned safe home, and back again, twice loaded that day afterwards; but as to this cart which touched Rose Cullender's house, after it was loaded, it was overturned twice or thrice that day; and after that they had loaded it again the second or third time, as they brought it through the gate which leadeth out of the field into the town, the cart stuck so fast in the gate's head, that they could not possibly get it through, but were forced to cut down the post of the gate to make the cart pass through, although they could not perceive that the cart did of either side touch the gate posts. And this deponent farther saith, that after they had got it through the gate way, they did with much difficulty get it home into the yard; but for all that they could do, they could not get the cart near the corn, but were fain to unload it at a great distance from the place, and when they began to unload, they found much difficulty therein, it being so hard a labour, that they were tired that first came, and when other came to assist them, their noses burst forth a bleeding; so they were fain to desist and leave it until the next morning, and then they

unloaded it without any difficulty at all.

Robert Sherringham also deposeth against Rose Cullender, that about two years since, passing along the street with his cart and horses, the axle-tree of his cart touched her house, and broke down some part of it, at which she was very much displeased, threatening him, that his horses should suffer for it; and so it happened, for all those horses, being four in number, died.

The jury, within the space of half an hour, brought them in both guilty.

This was upon Thursday in the afternoon, March 13, 1662.

The next morning the three children with their parents came to the Lord

Chief Baron Hales's lodgings, who all of them spake perfectly, and were as in good health as ever they were; and their friends were asked, at what time they were restored thus to their speech and health? and Mr. Pacy did affirm, that within less than half an hour after the witches were convicted, they were all of them restored and slept well that night, feeling no pain.

In conclusion, the judge and all the court were fully satisfied with the verdict, and thereupon gave judgment against the witches that they should be hanged.

And they were executed on Monday, the seventeenth of March following; but they confessed nothing.

#### QUERIES TO H. D. OR THE HAMPTON-COURT OBSERVER.

